

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

FY2012 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant Name: Maine Conservation Corps	Application ID: 12AC134705
Program Name: Maine Conservation Corps	

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. This feedback is provided on a restricted basis and cannot be shared or distributed outside of your organization. We hope you will find this information helpful in completing applications to our future grant competitions. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of your application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory.

Reviewers' Summary Comments:

- The applicant adequately addresses why the need and target community is the entire state of Maine. Supportive local and state statistical data establishes the need for serving poor communities in a poor state as an essential provider of hiking trails.
- The applicant describes in detail 87 full-time Member (including 6 veteran) slots as well as how the slots align with program activities and design.
- The applicant addresses that Members are an effective means to solve the community need due to the training Members receive. Members will also be able to build the capacity of local trail organizations in volunteer management and technical trail skills.
- The applicant addresses their proposed outcomes at the end of the three year cycle. The outcomes are a decrease in environmental degradation and erosion from human as well as natural causes; an increase of employment prospects and community participation of Maine veterans; and the creation of a sustainable, trained community volunteer base to manage local trail construction and rehabilitation projects. The applicant does not address how impact will be reported on an annual basis.
- The applicant clearly outlines the training of 6 Regional Planning and 6 Veteran Community members who will undergo an 11-week Trail Training Academy that entails developing/implementing a training program to build capacity of local trail organizations in volunteer management and technical trail skills. Also, Regional Planning and Veteran Community members' activities will include recruitment, training and leading volunteers in trail construction and maintenance projects.
- The applicant provides a detailed recruitment plan, through training plan, and a structured supervision plan for Members.
- The applicant address providing Members with opportunities to reflect on their term of service.
- Maine, the identified target community, needs a sustainable and effective recreational trail system, community

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involvement of Maine's veterans, and a skilled sustainable community volunteer base trained in trail construction and maintenance.

- Intervention includes establishing and improving recreational trails and registering, as well as training, Maine's veterans to become community leaders and recruit volunteers, specifically other Maine veterans.
- Members are well suited because the funds provided in National Service grants leverage local resources and provides training, supervision, materials, tools and support for efficient volunteer work assignments.
- Outcomes will be a decrease in environmental degradation and erosion from human as well as natural causes leading to safer trails and increased use.

• External Reviewer 2

• Comments:

- The Maine Conservation Corps. (MCC) clearly spells out 3 identified community needs which includes a sustainable and effective recreational trail system, community involvement for Maine veterans, and a skilled, sustainable community volunteer base trained in trail construction and maintenance.
- The applicant organization clearly states why the need was chosen as tourism provides roughly 58,000 jobs and generates nearly 5% of all Maine's economic activity.
- The applicant organization states why Maine veterans are involved in this project as volunteering is a key activity for returning veterans for physical and mental well-being, employment and their overall family environment.
- The applicant organization articulates the added value by AmeriCorps members as expressed by the Waterboro Land Trust Project Manager. However, further detail is needed on how Members add value to the project such as other trails they will be improving throughout the State.
- The applicant organization states that AmeriCorps members will be a highly effective means for solving identified community needs due to the training that MCC will provide and that AmeriCorps members have had a passion and intensity for service. In addition, through training and support, the MCC members will acquire the skills, knowledge and abilities to meet the needs of Maine communities. The applicant did not provide sufficient to fully describe why AmeriCorps members are highly effective as opposed to another group of highly qualified volunteer groups.
- The applicant organization clearly addresses the previous positive impact the program in addition to the success they have had in tackling identified problems.